
FY 2019
SMALL NEPA PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests

Please **do not leave any field BLANK**, unless it does not apply.
Submit form (Word doc) electronically to jjchynoweth@fs.fed.us by **May 9, 2019**.

(NOTE: Italicized / red comments are for reference only. You may delete them when completing form.)

Project Name	Turner Placer Exploration
District Name (or "Forestwide")	Red River
County where project located?	Idaho
FS Personnel Name, Phone Number and Email <i>If a partnership, please add name, phone and email; however, an FS employee MUST BE the project proponent and point of contact.</i>	Marty Jones, (208) 983-5158; martinjones@fs.fed.us Curtis Caton 935-4262 curtis.l.caton@fs.fed.us
Legal Location <i>Township(s), Range(s), and Section(s) of project.</i>	T29N, R7E, Section 22
District Ranger / Line Officer's Name <i>Person(s) responsible for signing the decision document</i>	Terry Nevius
Is the project associated with meeting a Forest target?	No

Which CE Category does this project fit?

Provide citation: 36 CFR 220.6(e)(x)

See below regarding 220.6(d)(x) projects.

- (8) Short-term (1 year or less) mineral, energy, or geophysical investigations and their incidental support activities that may require cross-country travel by vehicles and equipment, construction of less than 1 mile of low standard road, or use and minor repair of existing roads. Examples include, but are not limited to:
- (i) Authorizing geophysical investigations which use existing roads that may require incidental repair to reach sites for drilling core holes, temperature gradient holes, or seismic shot holes;
 - (ii) Gathering geophysical data using shot hole, vibroseis, or surface charge methods;
 - (iii) Trenching to obtain evidence of mineralization;
 - (iv) Clearing vegetation for sight paths or from areas used for investigation or support facilities;
 - (v) Redesigning or rearranging surface facilities within an approved site;
 - (vi) Approving interim and final site restoration measures; and
 - (vii) Approving a plan for exploration which authorizes repair of an existing road and the construction of 1/3 mile of temporary road; clearing vegetation from an acre of land for trenches, drill pads, or support facilities

A Project Record or written Decision are not required for projects for 36 CFR 220.6 (d) categories except at the Decision Maker's discretion.

***IF* being submitted under 36 CFR 220.6 (d), does the Decision Maker want a written Decision?**

Yes No

***If no*, this form **does not** need to be filled out nor submitted to the Small NEPA planner.**

***If yes*, provide the category above, complete the remainder of this form and have Decision Maker submit it to the Small NEPA planner.**

At what level does the Decision Maker want the project scoped?

Internal____ External* __X__

***Internal scoping* will be through the Small NEPA IDT, unless otherwise specified. Scoping would be documented in the Extraordinary Circumstances Checklist.**

***External scoping* will be with the public via a scoping letter, a legal notice, and the scoping letter posted on the NPCWNF website. The Project will only be scoped to the Tribe(s) et al (see * below), unless otherwise specified.**

****For external scoping, please to complete block below.***

Provide a list of the individuals, groups, agencies, etc. (other than those listed below*) with their mailing address and/or email address, of those who will be included for external Scoping.

- DO NOT provide only a name.
- DO NOT leave this box blank: If no additional individuals et al are to be scoped please enter N/A.

Gus Turner
712 Denver Cemetery Road
Grangeville, ID 83530

** The Nez Perce and Coeur d'Alene Tribes will be scoped. The following will also be included for all SN scoping: Friends of the Clearwater, Idaho Conservation League, Thomas E. Peterson and Bill Mulligan.*

What Level of Analysis (below) does the Decision Maker want for the Project?

_____ **Low level:** If the project's level of public scrutiny is projected to be relatively low or unknown, the line officer chooses who we would contact for scoping (limited). In this case specialists would only do the checklist for each project. Documentation for low level analysis projects would be a completed checklist filled out by the specialists, including the name of the specialist who performed the analysis, the project name, and date it was completed. No other written documentation would be generated.

X _____ **Moderate level:** If the project's level of public scrutiny is projected to be relatively moderate to high, then the line officer chooses who we would contact for scoping (a little broader). In this case, specialists would complete the checklist with the only write up being for items that are present and the rationale for the effects call. No write up would be given for items in the checklist that are not present. If the determination is no effect (which generally speaking, most CE's should have zero to very little adverse effects), then document why that determination was made in one paragraph or less. If the determination is an adverse effect, then why that determination was made would be written in less three paragraphs.

List the Management Area(s) in which your project is located.

10, 12D

What are the desired conditions (*relevant to your project*) for the Management Area(s) listed above?

MANAGEMENT AREA 10

A. Description

Management Area 10 consists of lakes, lakeside lands, perennial streams, seasonally flowing streams supporting riparian vegetation, and adjoining lands that are dominated by riparian vegetation. The width of the components of this management area varies and is determined by the riparian vegetation and the valley bottom width. Riparian vegetation is vegetation requiring a high level of soil moisture. The area is often nearly flat and is subject to various degrees of flooding or saturation. As additional acres of riparian areas are identified and mapped during project planning, the acres in this management area will increase. This area includes the floodplains of streams and the wetlands associated with springs, lakes, and ponds. The natural and beneficial values of riparian areas include groundwater recharge, moderation of flood peaks, maintenance of water quality, visual and recreational enjoyment, fish and wildlife habitat, cultural resources, and timber and forage production.

B. Goals

Manage riparian areas to maintain and enhance their value for wildlife, fishery and aquatic habitat, and water quality. Manage timber, grazing, and recreation to give preferential consideration to riparian dependent species on that portion of the management area "suitable" for timber management, grazing, or recreation. The goal for summer elk habitat in this management area is to manage 1,615 acres to achieve at least 75 percent of habitat potential; 6,815 acres to achieve at least 50 percent of habitat potential; and 2,875 acres to achieve at least 25 percent of habitat potential. Specific methods of how to achieve this will be determined on a site-specific basis during project planning.

Minerals Management Direction:

1. Recommend "no surface occupancy" in mineral leases.
2. Address reestablishment of fish habitat in all reclamation plans where habitat may be damaged by proposed mineral exploration or development activities.
3. Require specific mitigation and reclamation measures which address stream bed and stream bank stabilization, proper location and construction of settling ponds, and timely reestablishment of riparian vegetation.

MANAGEMENT AREA 12

A. Description

Management Area 12 consists primarily of forested lands. Timber productivity classes 3, 4, 5, and 6 are represented as are a variety of commercially valuable, softwood tree species. A variety of physical and biological environments occur as determined by soil, slope, aspect, elevation (approximately 3,800-6,500 feet), and climatic factors. This management area occurs across the entire nonclassified portion of the Forest. Although this management area consists primarily of productive forest land, there are minor inclusions of nonforest and low productivity forest lands.

This management area contains inclusions of other management areas as shown below:

In addition to the 539,884 acres mapped for this management area, there are approximately 29,193 acres of this management emphasis which occur as inclusions in other management areas.

B. Goals

Manage for timber production and other multiple uses on a sustained yield basis. Develop equal distribution of age classes to optimize sustained timber⁴ production. Manage at levels and intensities consistent with the schedules described in this plan to provide for other multiple uses and resources.

Is the project in an Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA)? No

If yes, which one?

** Fill in the 'Project in Roadless Area' table below, **AND** complete a Briefing Paper - note map requirements. Provide the completed Briefing Paper to the Environmental Coordinator and Brian Riggers prior to scoping.*

Is the project in a congressionally designated area, ex. Wilderness Area, Wild & Scenic River Corridor, Research Natural Area, Historic Trail, etc.? No

If yes, which one(s)?

** Please contact Carol Hennessey, cahennessey@fs.fed.us, 935-4270, **BEFORE** submitting this proposal, to discuss how the project may affect the designated area.*

** For projects that occur in the **Lolo Trail National Historic Landmark**, please contact Steve Lucas, slucas@fs.fed.us, 208-983-4040, **BEFORE** submitting this proposal, to discuss how the project may affect the designated area.*

Are there Floodplains or Wetlands in the project area? Yes

Are there Municipal Watersheds in the project area? No

If yes, which one?

Is the project located in an RHCA? Yes

What is the Purpose and Need for the proposed action*?

Laws governing activities on National Forest System lands provide the public a statutory right to conduct locatable mineral exploration, provided activities are reasonably incidental to mining and comply with other Federal laws and regulations (i.e. 1872 Mining Law as amended, 1897 Organic Act, 1955 Mining Act, and case law). The purpose of this project is to approve Gus Turner's Plans of Operations (Plan) to explore for mineral resources on National Forest System lands in the area of the proposed action. In accordance with 36 CFR 228.5, the Forest Service is required to determine whether to approve the Plan, as proposed, or to require changes or additions to the Plan deemed necessary to minimize adverse environmental effects and to provide for reclamation of surface resources (36 CFR Part 228A).

** The purpose and need describes: Why the action being proposed at this location at this time (the problem/the need for the action?). And the desired goal/outcome (the purpose) of the action.*

Describe the Existing Condition of the project area.

The project area lies within the riparian area of the Moose Creek drainage. The area is vegetated with riparian and upland vegetation and 20-30 year old timber regen of mixed species. A good portion of the riparian area was placer mined in the 1980s and is heavily revegetated.

Describe the Proposed Action.

Gus Turner proposes to conduct placer exploration activities on Moose Creek, a tributary of the South Fork Clearwater River. The operator will remove placer samples from a number of test pits or trenches for the purpose of testing for mineral values.

These test pits will be located on a line parallel with Moose Creek, and at the upper limit of a previously mined area located on both sides of Moose Creek approximately .75 miles upstream from its confluence with the South Fork Clearwater River. The pits will be approximately 10 ft. x 10 ft. or 10 ft. x 12 ft. and will be dug down to bedrock when/if possible. Each pit will be excavated by first removing all materials from a pit, separating the material by layers (topsoil, overburden, pay material, etc.). The samples will then be processed using a wash plant which recirculates the process water through a pair of settling ponds. These settling ponds may be reclaimed and relocated as work progresses upstream or downstream. Water will initially be drawn from Moose Creek and then recirculated from the settling ponds and reused.

Only one pit will be open at a time. This will minimize the amount of reclamation bond required. Each pit will be reclaimed concurrent with the operation, i.e. once testing is completed the pit will be refilled with material, overburden and topsoil, the site recontoured, and the affected area seeded and mulched.

Equipment used includes a medium sized track mounted excavator and wash plant. ATVs and pickups will be used to access the project area and to transport equipment and supplies as needed. A masticator may be used to clear down timber from the road in lieu of using chain saws and manual labor. This will have the benefit of clearing the road in a much shorter time and will return organic material to the soil more quickly as well.

Access will be via Forest Road # 1858 for a short distance from State Highway 14, then to Road # 307, then on Road # 307A to the project site. Road 307A will need some repair work at a washout adjacent to Moose Creek to gain access to the work site (see attached map) and will require brushing and minor blading and filling to allow safe passage of vehicles and equipment. From the end of Road #307A, a temporary road will need to be constructed parallel to Moose Creek to gain access to the work site. One stream crossing may be necessary, depending on the exact routes chosen for the temporary road. This crossing may be improved by either hardening the crossing, or by use of a temporary structure such as a culvert or bridge, as appropriate.

Work conducted under this proposal will take place within an RHCA, and in close (within 50' at times) to Moose Creek. An appropriate buffer of at least 30 ft. or as appropriate to conditions will be maintained between any surface disturbance and adjacent streams or wetland areas. Some dead and/or down timber may be removed for access and safety. A number of small trees will need to be removed. These will be cut down and piled to one side, then scattered about the disturbed area and left in place when work is finished and reclamation is complete.

A standard set of design criteria and mitigation measures have been developed for mining and will be implemented as appropriate for this project along with any additional mitigation that is appropriate. All appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) for water quality standards and weed control, and State of Idaho BMPs for mining will be followed. A water use permit will be obtained from the Idaho Department of Water Resources before any water is pumped from any live stream. A reclamation plan will be submitted and a bond will be obtained from the operator before any work can begin.

This proposal will take one year or less to complete. The exact timeframe will depend on the approval of the Plan of Operation.

List the Design Criteria / Mitigation Measures * to be included with the Proposed Action.

State of Idaho Best Management Practices for Mining will be incorporated into all mining and exploration proposals

General Requirements—These may not all be applicable to all mining projects.

1. Notify District Ranger or minerals administrator at least 48 hours before any work is to begin.
2. Wash all vehicles and equipment used at the site before being brought onto National Forest system lands to prevent the spread of noxious weeds, seeds or propagules.
3. Avoid disturbance of wetlands and stream riparian zones.
4. Avoid working on saturated soils. Exploration activities must cease to avoid sedimentation into intermittent streams if excessive storm water or ground water runoff is occurring.
5. Prevent discharge of water into any live stream or wetland. To avoid erosion and discharge impact to streams, all activities (including drilling, construction of pads, hand-dug sumps, and any overland travel) will be kept at least 164 feet (50 m) from flowing water that is down gradient.
6. Place weed free straw bales or install silt fence in places as identified by a Forest Service representative to minimize sediment migration from stockpiles and disturbed ground.
7. Obtain prior approval from the Forest Service for cutting or removal of trees or other large live vegetation. Downfall may be removed as needed.
8. Set aside cleared slash and green vegetation (e.g., bear grass) during test pit construction. Remove vegetation in clumps, if possible, with the soil mass intact. Store excavated topsoil and subsoil in separate stockpiles to be used during reclamation. Temporarily replant vegetation clumps in the topsoil stockpile.
9. Maintain only one (1) active pit or trench open at any one time. Reclamation may be occurring at one (1) other pit or trench concurrently.
10. To help alleviate the need for field crew to decide if fish are present in water withdrawal locations, a 1/8" screen will be installed on pump intake hoses even when utilizing a 5-gallon bucket with drilled holes. Water withdrawals will be located on small, high gradient streams as far up creek drainages as feasible to avoid habitat used by fish and sourced from streams under existing permits from the State of Idaho.
11. Collect process water in the existing pit or settling pond(s). Regulate discharge to prevent overtopping the pit/pond, and/or land apply excess water on a site designated by the Forest Service. Application sites will typically be natural sumps or depressions, pits or trap(s) that avoid impacts to wetlands or streams and minimizes impacts to other surface resources. Application rate will be such that overland flow is avoided and a natural infiltration occurs through forest duff.
12. Backfill and reclaim each test pit/trench as soon as testing has been completed for that site.
13. Follow the State of Idaho Best Management Practices (BMPs) for all surface disturbing activities, reclamation, and abandonment. BMPs are outlined in the Best Management Practices for Mining in Idaho

Small NEPA IDT/resource specialists are listed below. Contact them if you have any questions regarding their resource for your project.

Botany – Mike Hays, mhays01@fs.fed.us; 983-4028

Fisheries – Derrick Bawdon, dbawdon@fs.fed.us; 963-4211

Heritage – Steve Lucas, slucas@fs.fed.us; 983-4040

Hydrology – Cynthia Valle, cvalle@fs.fed.us; 963-4203

Minerals – Marty Jones, martinjones@fs.fed.us; 983-5158

Recreation – Carol Hennessey, cahennessey@fs.fed.us; 935-4270

Soils – Alex Rozin, alexandraroizin@fs.fed.us; 842-2100

Wild and Scenic River – Chris Noyes, chnoyes@fs.fed.us; 935-4251

Wildlife – Jim Lutes, jamesrlutes@fs.fed.us; 963-4202

PROJECT MAPS

Please send – separate from this form and per the instructions outlined below – a GIS-generated map or maps of the project area (pdf format only) with the project submission email.

- Make sure that the map layers can be turned on / off / are editable.
- Make sure the map(s) fits on an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper.

Provide at least one map, preferably “portrait” orientation, with the project area / features as:

- a Point, e.g. culvert, bridge, etc.,
- a Line, e.g. fence, road, creek, etc., and/or
- a Polygon, e.g. stand boundaries, treatment areas, etc.
 - Do not use a point if treating an area, use a polygon.
 - Points/lines/polygons need to be distinct and easily found on the map.
 - The project area / site needs to be centered on the map, especially if only one area/feature.

Please use the Forest Visitor Map as your map’s base layer.

- Do not add contour lines to the FV map unless needed for clarifying the proposed action. Contour lines can make the map difficult to read.
 - If contour lines are needed, make sure they are distinguishable from other linear features such as roads, trails, streams, etc.
- A topo map can be substituted for the FV map. If using a topo map but the contour lines are not important the topo lines should be light gray or opaque.
- Regardless of base map, make sure there are identifiable elements, e.g. towns, roads, streams, etc. on the map to help locate the project area on the landscape and that the elements are clearly labeled.

The preferred map scale (typically 1:24K) is whatever scale best presents the project area’s location and proposed activities:

- If the 1:24K scale is too small (i.e. the project feature(s) – point/line/polygon – would be hard to find or would be indistinguishable on just one map), use a larger scale to show the overall project area (coarse scale map) and smaller scaled maps to show the project features (fine scale map).
- If the 1:24K scale is too big (i.e. the project feature is a tiny point or thin line lost/hard to find on the larger landscape), use a smaller scale to highlight the feature while ensuring there are elements on the map to identify the project’s location.
- If you need to make additional maps, please make as few as possible.

At a minimum, all maps should include (with the preferred but not set in stone location on the map):

- a Title (project name and district name only (please); centered at top)
- a Legend (features clearly labeled; lower right corner)
- a Scale (in half mile, e.g. 0__0.25__0.5 miles, or full miles, e.g. 0__0.25__0.5__1.0 miles; lower left corner)
- a North Arrow (upper right corner)
 - Display all of the above in boxes with black outlines and a white backgrounds (not gray or yellow)
 - Do not ‘Halo’ the text or numbers or anything else on the map. Please.
 - The Scale needs to be large enough to read the numbers.

Finally, please include the mapmakers name and the date it was created on the map.

The Map(s) you provide will be used for Scoping the Public and the Tribes and in the Decision document. Please make sure they show – clearly, effectively, and professionally – what activity or activities are being proposed and where they are located on the Nez Perce - Clearwater National Forests.

SHAPEFILES

The resource specialists require the shapefile(s) of the project's proposed activities before they will conduct their analyses. Providing the shapefile does not substitute for providing a pdf map.

The Project Proponent needs to send the shapefile, or a location where the shapefile can be found, to the Small NEPA Planner (currently: jjchynoweth@fs.fed.us) by the time or shortly after the District Ranger submits this form.

- Shapefiles need to include the Project Name and have the Feature (culvert, bridge, etc.) labeled.
- Shapefiles need to include the following extensions – .dbf, .prj, .sbn, .shp, .shx, and .xml.

PROPONENT: When submitting the shapefile(s) you must include in the email how the location(s) of the project feature(s), i.e. line, point, and/or polygon, were determined (see below):

- Field-collected GPS data;
- From existing corporate GIS data (provide name of GIS layer);
- Created (digitized) from an aerial photo;
- Created (digitized) from the existing corporate GIS data;
- Created (digitized) from the NPCLW Visitor Map;
- Other (describe).

Projects in Roadless Area

<p>What is the Inventoried Roadless Area name?</p> <p><i>O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\Reference Material\Roadless Rule Info</i></p>	<p><u>Forest Plan IRA Name (if different):</u></p>
<p>Identify the Idaho Roadless Management Classification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Wild Land Recreation</i> • <i>Special Areas of Historic or Tribal Significance</i> • <i>Primitive</i> • <i>Backcountry Restoration</i> • <i>General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland</i> 	<p>Classification(s):</p>
<p>Does the project involve constructing or reconstructing roads? Yes*</p> <p>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.23</p>	
<p>Does the project involve cutting trees? Yes*</p> <p>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.24</p>	
<p>Does the project involve removing minerals, including common variety minerals? Yes*</p> <p>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.25</p>	

Additional Information: See map on next page.



